

Public  
Health Wales  
**Long Term  
Strategy**  
2018-30

**Working  
to achieve  
a healthier  
future for  
Wales**



**GIG  
CYMRU  
NHS  
WALES**

Iechyd Cyhoeddus  
Cymru  
Public Health  
Wales



# Introduction

Public Health Wales successfully implemented its first three year strategic plan which spanned from 2015 to 2018 and focused on key public health priorities to improve health and well-being in Wales. Over the period of that plan, and particularly the last two years, a considerable amount has changed, not just in Wales, but in the UK, Europe and globally.

As a result, we decided to involve our staff, partners and the public in developing a radically new Long Term Strategy, covering 2018-2030, that best met the current and future challenges and opportunities to transform the health of our nation. We have reviewed the evidence of the current and future state of health both in Wales and globally, explored the drivers of that (the determinants) and analysed the public health interventions that have the

most impact on delivering sustainable improvement in health and well-being over the short, medium and long term.

In developing our Long Term Strategy, we have embedded the five ways of working that underpin the Sustainable Development Principles within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. These reflect our renewed focus on the long term, prevention, integration, collaboration and involvement. This has enabled us to develop seven new strategic priorities that underpin our new Strategy.

We believe that working on these priorities will add the most value and make the most contribution to improving health, well-being and sustainability in Wales. This is essential if we are to meet the challenges and opportunities that we, as a nation, face over the next decade.

**This document** is our Long Term Strategy – its title represents our new purpose: Working to achieve a healthier future for Wales. It reflects the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Through implementing the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and our priorities, we are also contributing to the global health and sustainability agenda, in synergy with our partners nationally and internationally.

Alongside this document, we will also have implementation plans for each three year period, as well as a detailed annual plan showing the key delivery milestones for each year. The first of these was launched in 2018. During the course of the Strategy, we will take time to stop and review our context and evidence to ensure that it is still fit for purpose.

# Our challenges

## **Wales is facing challenging times over the coming years.**

Globally, these include an ageing population, the rise in the prevalence of long term conditions, a growing disparity in wealth within many nations, the early impacts of climate change, emerging threats in infectious diseases and antimicrobial resistance, as well as the rise in violence and extremist behaviour.

In a European context, our transition from the European Union will have implications that may have an impact on health. Within the UK, we continue to face economic challenges and socio-economic inequalities that can impact negatively on our health and well-being.

Despite these challenges, significant opportunities lie ahead: advances in technology will continue to emerge and materialise at pace. While we might not be able to imagine the extent of these over the next decade, it is clear that technology will be at the heart of improving health and well-being, particularly helping us to predict, prevent and treat ill-health. Better use of genomics, data science, artificial intelligence and social media will maximise these future opportunities. We will need to be innovative, agile and responsive to ensure that we consider, exploit and adopt, new and existing technology over the course of the Strategy.

Our people are living longer than ever before. Like many other countries, we in Wales face increasing challenges about how to stay well as we get older. We continue to experience significant gaps in health related to levels of disadvantage across Wales. This means that we are not as healthy a country as we could be. As we age some of us will need significant support and this contributes to challenges in the sustainability of our health and care services in Wales.

Our recently refreshed analysis of the burden of disease in Wales shows that people are spending longer in good health. However, the number of years spent living with poor health is also increasing and our gains in life expectancy have begun to plateau over recent years.

Similar to other developed countries it shows reductions in the burden of some conditions such as cardiovascular disease in Wales. However, we have an increase in preventable diseases such as liver disease and some forms of dementia. We have also seen an increase in poor mental well-being and substance misuse. Whereas smoking is the risk factor which has contributed most to the current burden of disease in Wales, being overweight and obese contribute most to years lived with a disability in Wales.

### **We are facing a future in Wales where:**

- our rising number of older people will result in a rise in age-related disease
- the lives of adults today include high levels of risk factors for developing future health conditions
- the environment (social, economic and physical) in which our children grow will impact on health into the next generation
- health damaging behaviours are driven by unequal access to economic, social and environmental opportunities
- damaging behaviours are evident among young people which sets the direction for their future health.

Despite these future challenges, we have a significant opportunity to meet them head on. By working together across all parts of society and sectors and building enablement and trust, we will focus and prioritise our collective efforts to improve the health and well-being of our people in Wales.

Our heritage, one of our many strengths in Wales, is one of community, passion, strength and innovation. We need to harness these characteristics to enable a Wales that is equal; has the healthiest generations than ever before; and can maximise the potential of our people and natural resources, in order to be resilient, sustainable and thriving.

## **We continue to experience significant gaps in health related to levels of disadvantage across Wales.**



# Enabling legislation and policy

We are fortunate in having unique policy and legislation. These are pivotal if we are to transform our nation to one that shifts power to our people; requires public bodies to work collectively, purposefully and in partnership with others and a policy approach that has a healthy and sustainable society at its heart.

*Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015* is pivotal legislation that aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

*Public Health (Wales) Act (2017)* covers a range of public health measures including restrictions on smoking, a new licensing system for special procedures and a National Obesity Strategy.

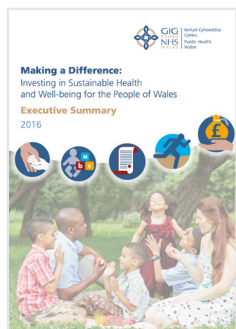
*Prosperity for All*, the Welsh Government's national strategy has four key themes: *prosperous and secure, healthy and active, ambitious and learning, and united and connected*. We have incorporated these along with the associated five priority areas of early years, housing, social care, mental health and skills and employability into the development of our Long Term Strategy.

*The Parliamentary Review of Health and Social Care in Wales* identifies important challenges facing our health and care services including: funding, workforce and recruitment, as well as rising demand and public expectations.

*A Healthier Wales: our Plan for Health and Social Care* is a whole system approach to health and social care, which is focussed on health and well-being, and on preventing illness in Wales. Our strategic priorities are fully consistent with the aims and actions within a Healthier Wales.

## Our supporting resources

In developing our Long Term Strategy we looked at a wide range of evidence, including three of our own publications:



In 2016, we produced *Making a Difference: Investing in Sustainable Health and Well-being for the People of Wales*. This provides Wales with a clear evidence-based focus of the types of interventions that have the greatest impact on preventing ill-health, improving well-being and yielding the largest return on investment. We know, for example, that Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are associated with over half the violence and drugs abuse, over a third of teenage pregnancies and

nearly a quarter of current adult smoking.

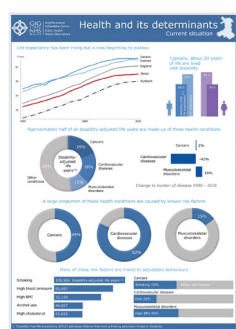
Embedding '*Making a Difference*' will enable our children to have the best start in life and to be better equipped to achieve the best that they can be. It will also build and embed more resilient citizens and sustainable communities; prevent avoidable poor-health throughout life and enable our older people to be as healthy and independent-living for as long as they can.



Predicting what health and well-being in Wales will be like in 2030 is challenging. In developing our Long Term Strategy, we asked the people of Wales for their views on their lives today and their aspirations for the future. Our national *Stay Well in Wales* survey, run by Public Health Wales and Bangor University, found that 53 per cent of people in Wales agree that more money should be spent on preventing illness and less on treating it.

### Other key findings included:

- 70 per cent agree that advertising of unhealthy foods to children should be banned to reduce childhood obesity. Only 13 per cent disagree.
- 47 per cent agree that advertising of alcohol should be banned to reduce alcohol problems. Only 26 per cent disagree.
- 82 per cent agree that healthy foods should cost a bit less and unhealthy foods a bit more. Only 6 per cent disagree.



Our *Health and its Determinants in Wales* report provides the most comprehensive and up-to-date assessment of health and well-being of the population of Wales. It draws data from across Wales and internationally, including the global burden of disease study.

The report describes the current situation relating to health in Wales as well as historic trends and drivers of health and well-being and future projections and emerging threats.

# Our Strategic Priorities

**In developing our new strategic priorities, we reviewed a wide range of evidence and talked to stakeholders, including the public. Taken together, the evidence is clear that there is a need to:**

- recognise the importance of addressing the wider determinants of health for improving population health and reducing health inequalities
- focus on the causes and risk factors for the most common health conditions in Wales in order to reduce differences in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy. Support the development of a sustainable health and care system focused on prevention and early intervention to deliver our contribution to A Healthier Wales
- invest in the early years (pregnancy to seven years) which is critically important for enabling healthy and fulfilling adult lives
- build a resilient and healthy society, working closely with our partners and the public with a particular focus on mental well-being
- recognise and act on the potential impact Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) have on adults' lives
- address emerging global threats from changes in infectious diseases around the world including the risk associated with the increased resistance to antibiotics
- act on the evidence on the negative impacts of climate change on health such as poor air quality
- provide more advice, support and intelligence to our stakeholders of what works to improve health, healthcare and well-being.





## To address these challenges we have developed the following seven strategic priorities which form the basis of our Long Term Strategy:

### **Influencing the wider determinants of health**

We will collaborate with others to understand and improve factors that impact on everyone's health.

### **Improving mental well-being and building resilience**

We will help everybody realise their full potential and be better able to cope with challenges that life throws at us.

### **Promoting healthy behaviours**

We will understand the drivers of unhealthy behaviour and make healthy choices easier for people.

### **Securing a healthy future for the next generation through a focus on early years**

We will work with parents and services to ensure the best start in life for all children in Wales

### **Protecting the population from infection and environmental threats to health**

We will apply our expertise to protect the population from infection and threats from environmental factors, working in collaboration with others to mitigate these risks to human health.

### **Supporting the development of a sustainable health and care system focused on prevention and early intervention**

We will work alongside our partners to support the development of sustainable and accessible health and care systems focused on prevention and early intervention.

### **Building and mobilising knowledge and skills to improve health and well-being across Wales**

We will develop the skills, policy, evidence-based knowledge to help us and our partners improve health and well-being.

# Our Priorities 2018-2030

**Building  
and mobilising  
knowledge and  
skills** to improve  
health and well-  
being across  
Wales

Influencing  
the wider  
determinants  
of health

Supporting  
the development of a  
sustainable **health and  
care system focused on  
prevention** and early  
intervention

*Working  
to Achieve  
a Healthier  
Future  
Wales*

**Protecting  
the public** from  
infection and  
environmental  
threats to  
health



**GIG**  
CYMRU  
**NHS**  
WALES

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Improving  
mental well-being  
and resilience

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Promoting  
healthy  
behaviours

Securing a  
**healthy future**  
for the next  
generation

Our Values:

*Working  
together with  
trust and respect  
to make a difference*

# The outcomes we want to see

**In developing our Long Term Strategy, we developed a range of outcomes for success, namely, that by 2030 we want:**

- the people of Wales to have a more equal chance of living a fulfilling life, free from preventable ill health
- Wales to have a population that know how to support their and their families' mental well-being, that supports everyone to be mentally healthy, citizens with greater resilience and a greater level of mental well-being
- an environment and society in Wales in which healthy choices are the easy choices
- more children to have achieved their full potential
- a Wales with reduced infections and which is prepared for and able to deal with the expected effects of climate change
- a Wales where we have shifted the balance from hospital to community based care and reduced the burden of disease from long-term conditions, with reduced incidence, improved early detection and survival outcomes
- a Wales where population health services and interventions are based on world class intelligence and analysis, giving maximum return on investment.

**In the following pages, we have set out in more detail the scope and what we aim to achieve for each of the priorities.**



**We will collaborate with others to understand and improve factors that impact on everyone's health.**

The wider determinants of health are social, economic and environmental factors that influence health, well-being and inequalities. By influencing the design and implementation of national and local policies and strategies relating to these determinants we will improve people's well-being and reduce inequalities in health.

Key determinants of health and well-being are our family, friends and communities, the quality and security of our housing, our level of education and skills, availability of good work, money and resources and also our surroundings.

## **Influencing the Wider Determinants of Health**



**By 2030, we want:**

- the people of Wales to have a more equal chance of living a fulfilling life, free from preventable ill health.

**This means:**

- helping children learn and young people achieve their potential
- supporting policy development that minimises income inequality
- supporting employers to create environments that support well-being
- supporting the NHS to reduce the impact of poverty, low income and debt as barriers to good health
- reducing the number of people that fall out of work as a result of poor health
- working with others to prevent homelessness
- promoting good housing quality
- maximising the potential of the built and natural environment to improve health and well-being

**What difference will we have made by 2030?****By 2030, we will:**

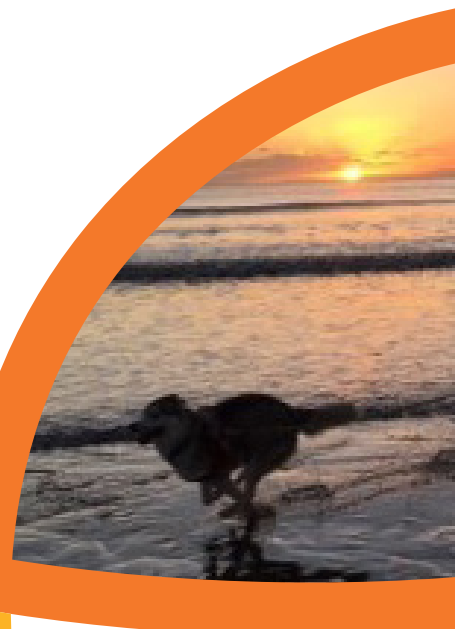
- have a learning environment in schools and other educational settings that better improve health
- have established the sustainable development principle as a way of working and we are enabling high quality Health Impact Assessment across Wales
- have influenced the main employers in Wales to create good work, maintain employment and invest in staff health and well-being
- be a leading source of advice and evidence on the wider determinants of health to key decision makers
- have improved the quality and accessibility of housing in Wales through an innovative health and housing partnership
- have worked with partners to maximise the potential of the built and natural environment to improve health and well-being



**We will help everybody realise their full potential and be better able to cope with challenges that life throws at us.**

Population approaches to improving mental well-being help individuals to realise their full potential, cope with the challenges that life throws at them, work productively and contribute to their family life and communities. Good mental well-being impacts physical as well as mental ill health and has the potential to influence related inequalities in health. Recent studies on ACEs have shown the relationship between ACEs and their potential impact in adult life. They have also highlighted the factors that build resilience (reduce the impact of ACEs) for individuals and communities. Resilience is a key component of mental well-being.

## **Improving mental well-being and building resilience**



**By 2030, we want Wales to have:**

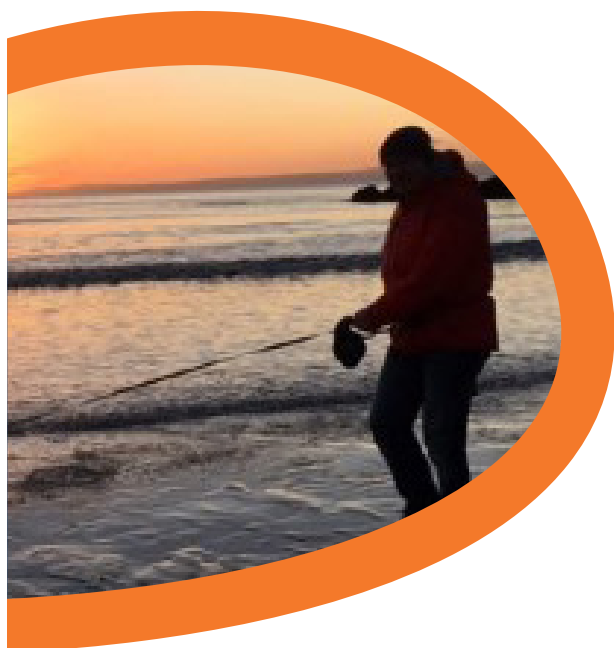
- a population that knows how to support their own and their families' mental well-being
- a society that supports everyone to be mentally healthy
- citizens with greater resilience
- a greater population level of mental well-being

**This means:**

- building self-esteem, self-confidence and the ability to understand and manage our emotions
- reducing the impact of emotional trauma and toxic stress (mitigating ACEs)
- building skills to create and maintain healthy relationships across the life course
- connecting people in communities to increase a sense of belonging and support (including sport)

**What difference will we have made by 2030?****By 2030, we will:**

- be leading an ongoing national conversation on what is important to the public and what helps us to attain better mental well-being, responding to the ever changing social and economic environment and working with our partners to stimulate collective action to improve outcomes
- be actively monitoring the mental well-being of the population and are using this to influence policy, strategy and programmes
- have supported partners in promoting mental well-being and resilience including reducing the impact of ACEs / trauma
- have facilitated a trauma and resilience informed Wales – aiming to break generational cycles of poor mental and physical health outcomes



**We will understand the drivers of unhealthy behaviour and make healthy choices easier for people.**

People's health related behaviours are influenced by a range of factors including social, economic and physical environment and mental well-being. By making it easier for people to adopt healthy behaviours we will reduce the burden of disease and help narrow the gap in health inequalities arising from long term conditions such as obesity, cancers, heart conditions, stroke, respiratory disease and dementia.

## Promoting Healthy Behaviours



**By 2030, we want Wales to have:**

- an environment and society in Wales in which healthy choices are the easy choices

**This means:**

- rapidly reducing smoking prevalence
- increasing physical activity and promoting healthy weight.
- preventing harm from a range of behaviours including substance use

**What difference will we have made by 2030?****By 2030, we will:**

- work with Welsh Government and others to deliver year on year increases in the proportion of children and young people who are smoke free and help an increasing number of smokers to quit
- have significantly increased the proportion of children and young people in Wales who are a healthy weight when they start school and into adulthood. We will work to create co-ordinated action across the whole system to support healthy food choices and promote a more active Wales
- have changed social norms about the acceptability of a range of health harming behaviours



**We will work with  
parents and services  
to ensure the best  
start in life for all  
children in Wales**

Early years are defined in policy in Wales as the period from pregnancy to seven years of age. A child's early years are a key time to ensure good outcomes later in life including better learning, access to good work and a fulfilling life.

**Securing a  
healthy future for  
the next generation  
through a focus on  
Early Years**



**By 2030, we want:**

- more children to have achieved their full potential
- to have supported parents in raising children and fewer children in Wales experiencing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)

**This means:**

- supporting families to give children the best start in life
- helping children feel safe and secure by preventing emotional trauma and toxic stress (preventing ACEs)
- facilitating supportive adult/child relationships
- supporting early years services to promote children's well-being

## What difference will we have made by 2030?

**By 2030, we will:**

- seek to ensure that every child has the best start in life and will have promoted and supported an integrated population based support system for all parents and families
- have increased the proportion of settings that take action to promote health in early years
- have worked with partners to reduce abuse and neglect of children



**We will apply our expertise to protect the population from infection and threats from environmental factors, working in collaboration with others to mitigate these risks to human health.**

It is a core function to apply our expertise and resources to protect the population from serious infection and the health effects of environmental problems such as air pollution and climate change. This will involve early detection, good planning and application of resource in collaboration with others to provide an effective response for our population.

**By 2030, we expect to have:**

- eliminated Hepatitis B and C as a significant threat to public health in Wales
- experienced fewer healthcare associated infections and only use antibiotics appropriately
- new classes of treatments to replace antibiotics and fewer people will die from infections as a result of resistance to antibiotics

**Protecting the population from infection and environmental threats to health**



- the highest immunisation uptake possible across all sections of the population
- prepared for and be able to deal with the expected effects of climate change
- significantly reduced deaths and illnesses from poor air quality
- strengthened international collaboration on bio-security thereby reducing further the threats from infectious diseases

#### **This means:**

- working with our partners to reduce the burden of infection through:
  - high levels of vaccinations and immunisations
  - rapid and effective management and control of infection in all settings
  - reducing inappropriate antibiotic prescribing
- working with our partners to reduce the burden of poor health arising from environmental hazards and the expected effects of climate change

## **What difference will we have made by 2030?**

#### **By 2030, we will:**

- have contributed significantly to reductions in morbidity and mortality linked to infections
- be collating and utilising health data sourced across the health and care system to direct prevention activities and identify earlier opportunities for intervention (timely diagnosis and appropriate treatment)
- have established strengthened capacity in Wales for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks.
- be recognised as system leaders for healthcare associated infections and antimicrobial resistance
- have worked with partners to reduce mortality and morbidity attributed to factors such as the impact of climate change and air pollution



**We will work alongside our partners to support the development of sustainable and accessible health and care systems focused on prevention and early intervention.**

We will be working collaboratively to support the development of sustainable and accessible models of care that focus on prevention, population based screening, timely intervention, continuous improvement and seamless care to maximize population benefit across the life course.

**Supporting the development of a sustainable health and care system focused on prevention and early intervention**



**By 2030, we expect to have:**

- shifted the balance from hospital to community based care
- reduced the burden of disease from long term conditions, with reduced incidence, improved early detection and survival outcomes.
- shifted the focus from professional to shared care
- continued to develop and deliver evidence based screening programmes, maximising benefit from new technologies and risk based algorithms

**This means:**

- shifting towards prevention
- early intervention in the community
- delivering high quality national population based screening programmes
- ensuring equitable service delivery
- improving quality and patient safety

**What difference will we have made by 2030?****By 2030, we will:**

- maximise opportunities to prevent disease through health service interactions with patients
- increase disease prevention and earlier intervention through approaches to maintain and improve focus on national population-based screening programmes. When disease is detected, pathways of care will be seamless
- reduce variation and inequality in care and harm in its delivery
- support care moving closer to the home and centre it round patients and carers



**We will develop the skills, policy, evidence-based knowledge to help us and our partners improve health and well-being.**

We play a key role in supporting evidence informed policy and practice. We can add value to the development, implementation and evaluation of joined up policy, at a local, national and international level, that supports the protection, improvement and promotion of health and well-being and reduces health inequalities across Wales. In order to achieve this we will enable the timely generation, review and communication of local, national and international knowledge to effectively improve, protect and sustain the health of current and future generations in Wales. We will inform policy and practice through expert, impartial, trusted intelligence leading a whole-system, cross-sector approach for population health.

**Building  
and mobilising  
knowledge and skills  
to improve health  
and well-being  
across Wales**



**By 2030, we want:**

- a population with a deeper understanding of the health challenges and opportunities in Wales, empowered to influence the outcomes for their communities
- public services influencing population health outcomes informed by world class knowledge, intelligence and analysis, giving maximum return on investment embedded in sustainable development approaches.
- public services with the skills, capacity and support to access and apply world class intelligence and research to inform policy, quality assured health impact assessment and a sustainable development approach
- international agencies learning from and contributing to excellence in application of sustainable population health benefits in Wales.

**This means:**

- developing a new public health research and development agenda
- working with academia to develop public health research capacity and educational provision
- informing policy and taking action
- exploiting new technology
- implementing a new health intelligence system
- developments in health economics and metrics
- international engagement
- development of skills

## What difference will we have made by 2030?

**By 2030, we will:**

- have a thriving research and development environment, drawing from and contributing to the best international evidence, attracting diverse investment and employing research talent from around the world
- be an international exemplar and trusted national resource in the use of evidence and intelligence to inform decision making for health
- be a recognised lead in the mobilisation of knowledge for population health, through system wide leadership
- have influenced key decision makers through a knowledge- informed, health impact, future-focused and sustainable approach



# How we will take forward our **Long Term Strategy**

## **OUR PURPOSE:**

**Working to achieve  
a healthier future  
for Wales**

These values are critical in how we work together within Public Health Wales and also how we approach working with our partners and the public.

Staying true to our purpose and modelling our values are critical to delivering our Strategy and this will depend on the capability and capacity of our most important asset: our people.

Some of the capabilities that we need for the future, we have now. Some of these skills will need to be built internally and some in collaboration with our various partners and stakeholders across the system.

## **OUR VALUES:**

**Working together,  
with trust and respect,  
to make a difference**

We will seek to implement our Strategy in an open and transparent way and develop measurable outcomes so that meaningful improvement can be demonstrated. We look forward to working with the public, our partners across all different sectors, Welsh Government and colleagues from around the world to drive a healthy, sustainable and vibrant Wales.

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